

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING
MONDAY FEBRUARY 24, 2014, 7:30 P.M.
301 KING STREET, 2nd FLOOR
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

D O C K E T

1. Announcement of deferrals and withdrawals.
2. Approval of the January 27, 2014, Traffic and Parking Board meeting minutes.
3. **STAFF REPORTS AND UPDATES**
PUBLIC HEARING:
4. **ISSUE:** Recommendation on review of the Director's decision to remove parking on King Street from West Cedar Street to Highland Place in order to install bicycle lanes and associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

NEXT TRAFFIC & PARKING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING MARCH 24, 2014

MINUTES
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING
MONDAY JANUARY 27, 2014, 7:30 P.M.
301 KING STREET, 2nd FLOOR
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair, Jay Johnson, Vice Chair, Larry Ruggiero, Gregory Cota, William Schuyler, Mary White, Kevin Posey and James Lewis.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None were absent.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Rich Baier, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services, Bob Garbacz, Division Chief, Traffic, Ravi Raut, Traffic Studies Engineer, Christopher Spera, City Attorney, Hillary Poole, Complete Streets Coordinator, Kathleen Leonard, Public Information Officer and Chris Dowling, Traffic Engineer I.

1. Announcement of deferrals and withdrawals: There were no deferrals or withdrawals, but City Staff noted that item 10 would be switched with item 9 in the order of which the docket items would be presented during the public hearing.
2. Approval of the November 25, 2013, Traffic and Parking Board meeting minutes: Mr. Ruggiero made a motion, seconded by Mr. Schuyler, to approve the minutes from the November 25, 2013, Traffic and Parking Board meeting. The motion carried unanimously.
3. **STAFF REPORTS AND UPDATES:** Rich Baier, Director of Transportation and Environmental Services, updated the Traffic and Parking Board on the King Street Bike Lanes proposal. Rich Baier and the City Attorney, Christopher Spera, informed the Traffic and Parking Board that during the February meeting the Board will make a recommendation to City Council to accept the proposal, deny the proposal, accept the proposal with changes, or offer no opinion. Mr. James Lewis made a request that City Staff provide a full account of the City's efforts to reach out to the community relating to the King Street Bike Lanes issue, including who from City Staff made the attempt to reach out.

PUBLIC HEARING:

4. **ISSUE:** Consideration of a request to install "SCHOOL: SPEED LIMIT 15 WHEN FLASHING" signs in front of five schools:
 - Patrick Henry Elementary
 - Jefferson Houston Elementary
 - Cora Kelly Elementary
 - TC Williams High School

- John Adams Elementary: Rayburn Avenue between Harding Avenue & N. Beauregard Street

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: No one from the public spoke on this issue.

DISCUSSION: Hillary Poole presented the item to the Board. The Board asked City Staff to look into making speed limits consistent through all school zones in the City.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Posey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Schuyler, to approve staff's recommendation. The vote carried unanimously.

5. **ISSUE:** Consideration of a request to make parking restrictions along 400-800 Washington Street consistent.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: No one from the public spoke on this issue.

DISCUSSION: Bob Garbacz presented the item to the Board. There was no discussion on this issue.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Posey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cota, to approve Staff's recommendation. The vote carried unanimously.

6. **ISSUE:** Consideration of a request to install a stop sign for northbound Leslie Avenue at Alexandria Avenue.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: No one from the public spoke on this issue.

DISCUSSION: Hillary Poole presented the item to the Board. There was no discussion on this issue.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Ruggiero made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lewis, to approve Staff's recommendation. The vote carried unanimously.

7. **ISSUE:** Consideration of a request to relocate Alexandria Police Department parking spaces from the unit block of King Street to the Strand, south of Wales Alley.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: No one from the public spoke on this issue.

DISCUSSION: Hillary Poole presented the item to the Board. The Board made comments about DASH wanting their designated parking locations in an area where they could see the trolleys, and whether or not having the Alexandria Police Department vehicles out of sight was better for the King Street and Union Street area. City Staff noted that both DASH and the APD were supportive of this issue.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Posey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cota, to approve Staff's recommendation contingent on construction of the plaza at the foot of King Street. Mr. Posey, Mr. Cota, Mr. Schuyler, Mr. Lewis, and Ms. White voted aye, while Mr. Johnson and Mr. Ruggiero voted nay. The motion passed with 5 ayes to 2 nays.

8. **ISSUE:** Consideration of a request to remove one, “3 Hour, 8A.M.-5P.M., Monday-Friday, except District 7,” parking space, and install a “No Parking Here to Corner” sign on the north side of West Linden Street, 20 feet from the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: No one from the public spoke on this issue.

DISCUSSION: Bob Garbacz presented this item to the Board. There was no discussion on this issue.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Lewis made a motion, seconded by Ms. White, to approve Staff’s recommendation. The motion carried unanimously.

9. **ISSUE:** Consideration of an ordinance to amend and reordain Title 9 (LICENSING AND REGULATION) Chapter 12 (TAXICABS AND OTHER VEHICLES FOR HIRE), Division 2 (CERTIFICATES OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY) of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended, to:
1. Remove the driver transfer provision; and,
 2. Change how grandfathered certificates are treated upon the certificate holder’s departure from the Alexandria Taxicab industry.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: Kyle Summers and Spencer Kimball of Yellow Cab spoke in favor of the request. Kenneth Bynum, Joyce Woodson, and Chand Dodhy spoke against the request.

DISCUSSION: Bob Garbacz presented the item to the board. Mr. Schuyler updated the Traffic and Parking Board on the Taxicab Taskforce.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Posey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cota, to approve Staff’s recommendation. The voted carried unanimously.

10. **ISSUE:** Consideration of a request to install a “No Parking” sign on the curb in between 3819 and 3817 Elbert Avenue.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: Frances Garner and David Forbes spoke in favor of the request.

DISCUSSION: Bob Garbacz presented the item to the Board. There was no discussion on this issue.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Schuyler made a motion, seconded by Mr. Posey, to approve Staff’s recommendation. The vote carried unanimously.

**TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING
FEBRUARY 24, 2014**

DOCKET ITEM: 4

ISSUE: Recommendation on review of the Director's decision to remove parking on King Street from West Cedar Street to Highland Place in order to install bicycle lanes and associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

PROCEDURAL

STATUS: Review of Director's decision pursuant to City Code Section 10-2-8

LOCATION: North side of King Street from West Cedar Street to Highland Place

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the board recommend that City Council uphold the Director's decision to remove parking on King Street from West Cedar Street to Highland Place in order to install bicycle lanes and associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements and forward such recommendation to City Council for public hearing and consideration.

BACKGROUND: The portion of King Street from Russell Road to Janney's Lane was resurfaced in the fall of 2013 and was evaluated based on the Complete Streets Policy, which states that "...if the safety and convenience of users can be improved within the scope of the pavement resurfacing... such projects shall implement Complete Streets infrastructure to increase safety for users." In conjunction with the resurfacing project, the City is proposing to narrow the moving lanes to provide traffic calming, install bicycle lanes in both directions and provide pedestrian safety upgrades to the roadway. Additional pedestrian safety elements were incorporated into the plan as a result of public input.

The purpose of this project is to slow vehicle speeds and provide a safer environment for all users including pedestrians and cyclists as well as safer routes to the nearby schools and Metro Station along King Street. The before and after design plans between West Cedar St. and Highland Pl. can be viewed in Attachment 1 Figure 4a. Figure 4b outlines the changes made for the three segments of roadway – from West Cedar St to Highland Pl., from Highland to just east of West View Terrace, and from West View Terrace to Janney's Lane.

The proposed changes include:

- Narrow the travel lanes from 11 ½ feet to 10 ½ feet
- Install a 5' bike lane in the westbound direction and a 4' bike lane in the eastbound direction with shared lanes shown in yellow below and a signed alternate bike route through the neighborhood
- Provide a wide edge line from Janney's Lane to Highland Place on the south side of the street to provide a buffer for the sidewalk in the stretch where there are no bike lanes to buffer the sidewalk
- Provide a safer pedestrian crossing at Upland Place and King Street by installing the rapid flashing beacon. The crosswalk at this intersection has been upgraded to high visibility for improved safety.

- Install, as feasible, pedestrian improvements to Highland Place at King Street which could include pedestrian signals and push buttons for crossing King Street.

The Director announced his decision to implement the foregoing changes on December 20, 2013¹. On December 23, 2013, City Council received an email from Mr. Frank Buckley, a citizen who had spoken before the Traffic & Parking Board in opposition to the project, requesting a hearing regarding the Director's decision. Based on an additional review of the City Code by the City Attorney, the City has decided to treat Mr. Buckley's December e-mail request as an application pursuant to City Code Section 10-2-8 to change a street control established by the Director. Pursuant to City Code Section 10-2-8, the Board must provide a recommendation to the City Council regarding this project (Attachment 2).

DISCUSSION: The Director decided to move forward with the project; in the context of that decision, T&ES staff shortly thereafter distributed a letter to residents, boards and commissions setting forth the decision and stating that staff would continue to work with residents to identify additional safety improvements that could be installed along King Street and in adjacent neighborhoods (Attachment 3). Throughout this project, the need for improved safety along King Street has been a common concern for all stakeholders. Letters of support for the project were sent from the Environmental Policy Commission, the Transportation Commission, The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and the Park and Recreation Commission (Attachment 4). The Director ultimately decided to move forward with the project because the proposed plan will make the roadway safer for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.

To address the Traffic and Parking Board's request at the November 25, 2013 meeting that staff defer the project installation and continue to work with the community regarding this plan, staff attended two additional community meetings to hear comments about the project and to work with the community to identify additional pedestrian safety improvements that could be implemented along King Street or in the adjacent neighborhoods. The meetings were held on January 16 and February 19, 2014 and were hosted by the Taylor Run Civic Association. These meetings were held in addition to the public outreach previously conducted, as listed in the November 25th docket memorandum (Attachment 1). In addition, the Director had many conversations with various stakeholders to fully understand the concerns of those on both sides of the issue.

The project and this Board's recommendation will be considered by City Council at its public hearing on March 15, 2014 City Council meeting.

¹ The King Street Bicycle Lanes and Pedestrian Improvement project was first brought to the attention of the board as a staff update at the July 22, 2013 meeting. The project was later presented to the Board on November 25, 2013 after two public meetings were held and the plan was modified to address some of the community concerns. At that meeting, staff recommended that the Board approve the request to remove parking on the north side of King Street, between West Cedar Street and Highland Place, to install traffic calming and bicycle lanes. The Board voted to defer the project and recommended to the Director of Transportation and Environmental Services that staff should continue to work with the community until greater compromise could be reached. Following the Board's recommendation to the Director of Transportation and Environmental Services to defer the project, the Director considered the board's recommendation in light of a previous deferral, considerable safety outreach conducted and safety implications, and ultimately decided to go forward with the project.

Attachment 1 – Traffic and Parking Board 11.25.2013 Docket

TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOVEMBER 25, 2013

DOCKET ITEM: 4

ISSUE: Consideration of a request to remove parking on King Street from West Cedar Street to Highland Place in order to add Bike Lanes.

APPLICANT: City of Alexandria, Transportation and Environmental Services

LOCATION: East side of King Street from West Cedar Street to Highland Place

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the request to remove parking on the north side of King Street from West Cedar Street to Highland Place to install traffic calming and bicycle lanes.

DISCUSSION:

The portion of King Street from Russell Road to Janneys Lane was resurfaced this fall and was evaluated based on the Complete Street's Policy, which states that "if the safety and convenience of users can be improved within the scope of the pavement resurfacing... such projects shall implement Complete Streets infrastructure to increase safety for users." In conjunction with the resurfacing project, the City is proposing to narrow the moving lanes to provide traffic calming, install bicycle lanes in both directions and provide pedestrian safety upgrades to the roadway.

This project is intended to slow vehicle speeds and provide a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists as well as safer routes to the nearby schools. The before and after design plans between West Cedar St. and Highland Pl. can be viewed in Figure 4a. Figure 4b outlines the changes made for the three segments of roadway – from West Cedar St to Highland Pl., from Highland to just east of West View Terrace, and from West View Terrace to Janney's Lane.

The proposed changes include:

- Narrow the moving lanes from 11 ½ feet to 10 ½ feet
- Install a 5' bike lane in the westbound direction and a 4' bike lane in the eastbound direction with shared lanes shown in yellow below and a signed alternate bike route through the neighborhood
- Provide a wide edge line from Janney's Lane to Highland Place on the south side of the street to provide a buffer for the sidewalk in the stretch where there are no bike lanes to buffer the sidewalk
- Provide a safer pedestrian crossing at Upland Place and King Street by installing the rapid flashing beacon. The crosswalk at this intersection has been upgraded to high visibility for improved safety.
- Install, as feasible, pedestrian improvements to Highland Place at King Street which could include pedestrian signals and push buttons for crossing King Street.

Bicycle facilities are recommended for King Street in the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan which involved an extensive public outreach process in the development of the Plan's recommendations. These bicycle lanes would provide a connection from the King Street Metrorail Station to the newly installed bicycle facilities on Janneys Lane. The bike lanes would require the removal of parking along King Street from West Cedar Street to Highland Place.

Currently, there are approximately 27 parking spaces along the east curb of King Street with no parking on the west curb. The City conducted fourteen surveys of the parking utilization of these spaces over a month long period at different times of day and during different days of the week. The survey showed that, on average, there were less than three cars parked along this section of roadway at a time. Many of the houses from West Rosemont Avenue to Upland Place abut King Street but have a main entrance on North View Terrace. Parking utilization for this portion of the roadway was, on average, less than one vehicle per survey period. Vehicles parked along this roadway tend to be delivery or service vehicles and have out-of-state plates. The changes to parking are shown in Figure 4c.

The City has received a number of requests from residents and civic associations for traffic calming along King Street and better bicycle access to the King Street Metrorail Station, and the public outreach process for this project is listed below:

- Taylor Run Civic Association - 6.12.13
- Traffic and Parking Board Briefing - 7.22.13
- Alexandria Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) - 8.19.13
- Neighborhood flyers distributed - 9.11.13
- Public Meeting 1 - 9.18.13
- Public Meeting 2 - 10.30.13
- Environmental Policy Commission - 11.4.13



Figure 4a - Before and After (West Cedar St. to Highland Pl.)

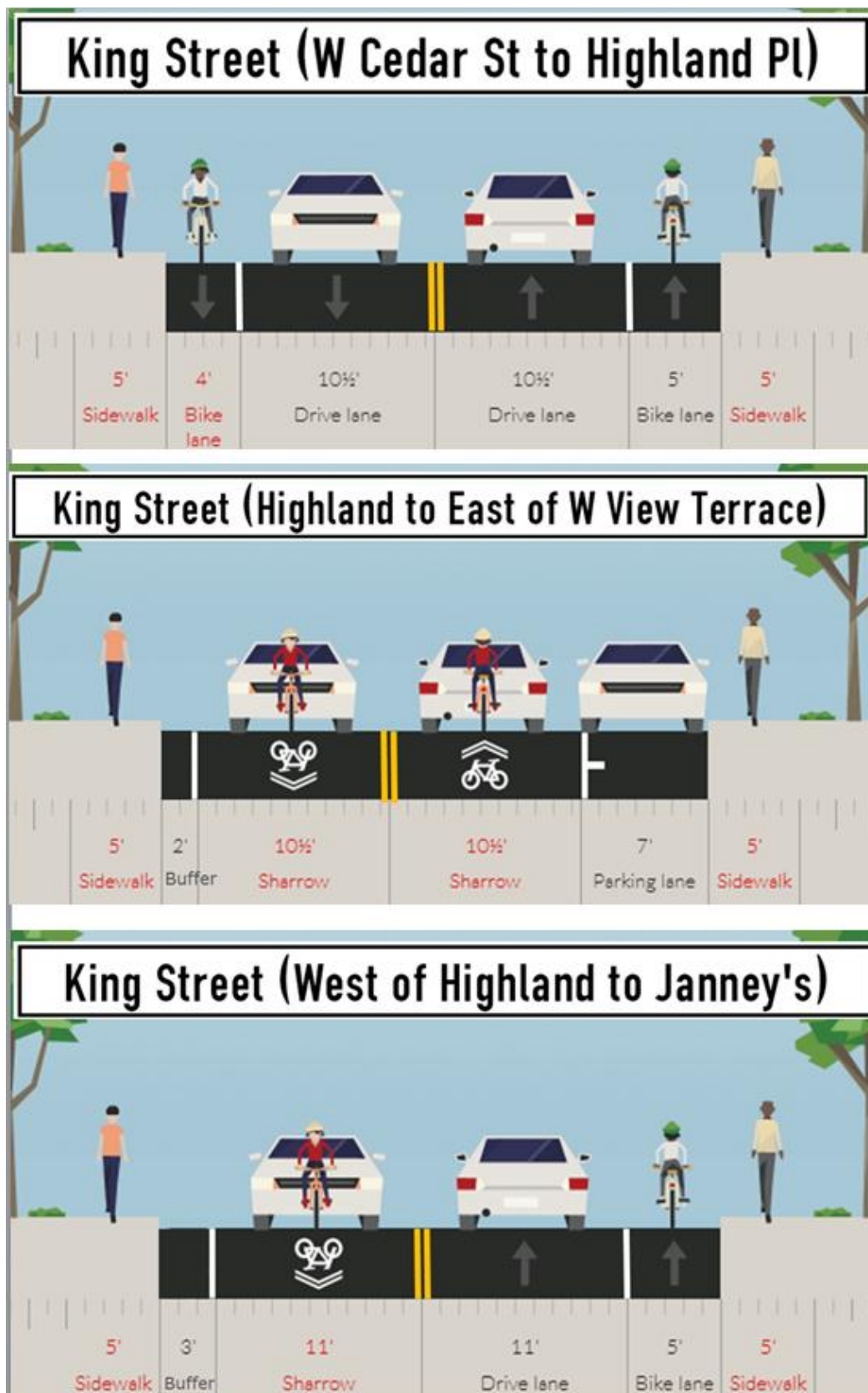


Figure 4b - Proposed Cross Sections

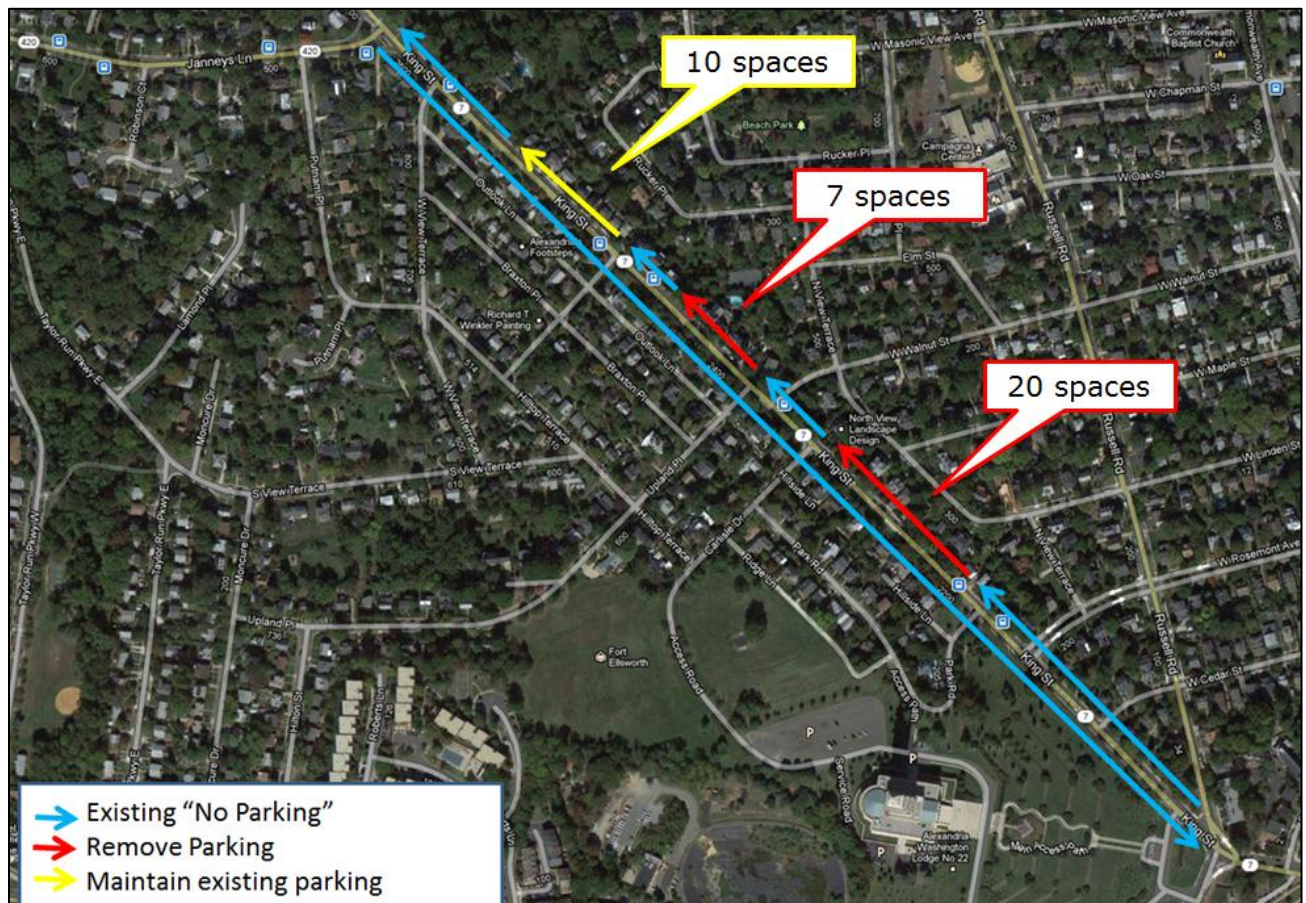


Figure 4c - Changes to Parking

Attachment 2 – City Code Section 10-2-8

Any person desiring to remove or change any control device established by the director of transportation and environmental services shall first apply to the traffic and parking board. After a hearing is had before the board, the board shall forward its recommendation to the city council and such person may apply to the city council for a further hearing. The city council shall have the power to retain, remove or change any control; provided, that the council shall first examine the recommendation from the traffic and parking board, receive a report on the matter from the director of transportation and environmental services and hold a hearing in relation thereto.”

Attachment 3 – Letter to King Street Residents



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
301 King Street, Room 4100
Alexandria, Virginia 22314**

December 20, 2013

Dear King Street Residents,

I want to thank you all for your participation and patience throughout the King Street Bicycle Lanes and Pedestrian Improvement project. As you know, King Street between Janney's Lane and Callahan Drive was resurfaced in October 2013. As with all road resurfacing projects, I am required to follow the City Council adopted Complete Streets Policy which states, *"if safety and convenience of users can be improved within the scope of pavement resurfacing operations, such projects shall implement Complete Streets infrastructure to increase safety for users."*

With projects of this type, there are always issues of balancing the needs of all street users. In order to ensure that I had a complete understanding of all the issues related to the implementation of this type of project, extensive public outreach was conducted. The time, effort and input of the residents was essential in the development and refinement of a plan. This outreach included three community meetings, four Commission meetings, over 200 testimonials, and a public hearing at the Traffic and Parking Board, which provided ample opportunities for community input on this project. As a result of this process, significant modifications and improvements to the plan were made that I believe will improve the safety for all users on King Street.

The goals of the King Street project, as supported by the Complete Streets Policy, are to:

- Provide facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers
- Improve the safety and convenience of all street users
- Implement City Council adopted plans and policies

Project Description: The King Street improvements aim to reduce vehicle speeds by narrowing the travel lanes and installing a variable speed sign, which have been shown to reduce speeds and make the roadway safer for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. The added bicycle lanes provide designated space for cyclists and encourage them to ride in the roadway instead of on the narrow sidewalk, making it safer for pedestrians by reducing conflicts. The bicycle lanes also provide a safe location for cyclists riding up the hill, who may be traveling as slowly as 5 miles per hour (mph). These lanes create a buffer for pedestrians along the south sidewalk, which currently abuts the travel lane, and provides unobstructed visibility for residents on the north side as they enter and exit their driveways.

Public Meetings: Following an introduction of the project to the Taylor Run Civic Association on June 12, 2013, a public meeting with substantial community turnout was held on September 18, 2013. At that meeting, the City proposed installing bicycle lanes on both sides of King Street between West Cedar Street and Janney's Lane by removing the on-street parking. The intent of this proposal was to leverage the road resurfacing project and redesign the roadway consistent with the City's Complete Streets Policy. I received and reviewed a number of comments during and after this meeting, including concerns about loss of parking, excessive speeds, provision for loading and drop-off and concerns about visibility backing out of driveways. In response to this input, my staff revised the plan to address as many of these concerns as practical and collected additional data, including volumes, speeds and crash data.

I reviewed all of the data collected which includes:

- Parking utilization surveys, which were conducted during AM and PM weekday peak hours and off-peak hours on both weekdays and weekends. On average, less than three vehicles were parked along this roadway. The highest occupancy observed was six vehicles. More than half of all parked vehicles were located west of Highland Place.
- Crash analyses was reviewed and categorized by mode, time of day and season. There was one crash involving a pedestrian over a five-year period and none reported involving bicyclists.
- Speed surveys showing that 85th percentile speeds were as high as 34 mph in the eastbound direction and were 33 mph in the westbound direction. The posted speed limit is 25 mph.
- Vehicle volume counts that were used to evaluate the feasibility of the proposed plan and averaged nearly 12,750 per day.
- Bicycle volume counts to determine the use of this roadway prior to the installation of safe, designated bicycle facilities and averaged 12 during the PM peak period.

The volume of vehicular traffic, large vehicles and associated travel speeds continue to support the need for infrastructure that accommodates cyclists by providing them adequate facilities.

A modified plan was then presented at a second public meeting on October 30, 2013, and to the Traffic and Parking Board on November 25, 2013. This plan focused on the safety concerns that were voiced in response to the first proposal. New elements to provide a safer street were incorporated including a wider westbound bike lane and a variable speed sign. Ten parking spaces were maintained at the top of the hill, between Highland Place and Janney's Lane, where cyclists can more safely share the road with moving vehicles and parking surveys revealed the highest parking utilization. While a continuous bike lane from West Cedar Street to Janney's Lane accomplishes this goal as the original plan depicted, the modified plan also accomplishes the project goals while better balancing the needs of the community. The core safety need as related to the cyclists as a mode of travel is accommodation along the King Street hill between West Cedar Street and Highland Place.

Public Hearing: At the Traffic and Parking Board's public hearing on November 25, 2013, the modified plan was presented so that the Board could provide me with a recommendation regarding the parking removal associated with this project. There were 66 speakers, 48 for the proposal and 18 against. The central theme that I heard voiced by both sides was the need for a

safer street. Those that did not support the project generally spoke about improving safety, the loss of the parking lane which currently provides space for loading, drop-off and visitor parking. Project proponents generally spoke in favor of designing the street more safely for cyclists and pedestrians and correcting a critical “missing link” in the City’s bicycle network that provides access to the King Street Metrorail station, a major transportation hub that provides regional connections throughout the Metro area as well as other destinations including T.C. Williams High School. As the design of this project pertains to the safety of roadway users, the process does not include a recommendation or approval for action by the Alexandria City Council.

Additionally, in order to gain broad input, both the original and modified plans were presented to the Transportation Commission, Environmental Policy Commission, Park and Recreation Commission and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. These bodies, that each represent Alexandria through the purview of their expertise, all submitted letters of support for this project stating that the project met the goals and objectives adopted by the City through numerous plans.

The process has affirmed that the modified plan is consistent with numerous master plans and adopted policies endorsed by City Council as listed below:

- City Council Goal #3: *A multimodal transportation network that supports sustainable land use and provides internal mobility and regional connectivity for Alexandrians*
- Transportation Master Plan: *Implement a citywide bikeway network to serve all users and trip types, provide end-of-trip facilities, improve bicycle/transit integration, implement encouragement programs and improve safety*
- Eco-City Alexandria: *We see Alexandria as a city where social well-being is supported by a strong economy and sustained by a healthy environment. Specifically, we envision Alexandria as a city where we travel less and less by car and increasingly by mass transit, walking, and bicycling*
- Complete Streets Policy: *Alexandria shall incorporate Complete Streets infrastructure into existing public streets to improve the safety and convenience of users and construct and enhance the transportation network for all users*

It should be noted that the Complete Streets Policy allows for exceptions to comprehensive design, such as excessive cost or that the use of the roadway by bicyclists or pedestrians is prohibited by law, neither of which apply in this case.

To ensure that my staff was not overlooking any safety or design factors, I directed that the plan be peer-reviewed by a professional engineering firm as well as a Complete Streets expert from the National Complete Streets Coalition. The plan as designed, even with a variation in the roadway of plus or minus a foot, meets or exceeds the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) design guidelines pertaining to travel and bicycle lane widths and provides pedestrian accommodations recommended for this street type.

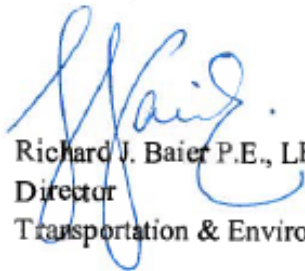
As part of the process, the Traffic and Parking Board was faced with a very difficult task and had to balance many passionate opinions and testimonials. At their November 25, 2013 meeting, the Board ultimately recommended to defer the project in order to achieve greater compromise with the various interests of the community.

This has been a challenging and complicated project, and I am empathetic to the inconvenience that the loss of parking will create for residents who currently have street parking available in front of their homes. I am also empathetic to the pedestrians and bicyclists that use this corridor on a daily basis. I have taken every comment and concern under consideration. I walked, drove and rode my own bike up and down King Street to make sure that I experienced the roadway from the perspective of all street users. It was this experience that affirmed my belief that it is imperative to implement a plan that improves the safety concerns highlighted as part of this project.

As a professional engineer tasked with ensuring the safety for all users of our street system and after reviewing the data and researching alternative proposals, I believe that the modified plan is the best plan to achieve the common goals of improving safety and balancing the needs of multiple users of King Street. I reached this conclusion after much thought and analysis, taking into account the comments and concerns raised by the community.

A delay of this decision to further study and discussion is not recommended. I do, however, believe that the City and the community can, and should, continue to evaluate additional measures to improve pedestrian safety throughout adjacent neighborhoods, and my staff will work with them to do so this spring. We will be seeking input from the Rosemont and Taylor Run Civic Associations. **At this time, I have directed my staff to move forward with this the implementation of the modified plan for the King Street Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements in the new year.**

Sincerely,



Richard J. Baier P.E., LEED AP
Director
Transportation & Environmental Services

Cc: The City Manager's Office
Mayor and Honorable City Council
Transportation Commission
Environmental Policy Commission
Park and Recreation Commission
Alexandria Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Alexandria Traffic and Parking Board

Attachment 4 – Letters of Support



November 18, 2013

Thomas "Jay" Johnson, Jr.
Chair, Traffic & Parking Board
City of Alexandria
Alexandria, VA 22314

Bicycle Lanes on King Street

Dear Chairman Johnson:

I am writing on behalf of the Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission to request that you support establishing traffic calming and continuous bike lanes on King Street, including the segment of King Street between West Cedar Street and Janneys Lane. In addition to better providing for safety for all modes of transportation, the project would help to achieve the City's Eco-City multi-modal transportation goals by improving access to King Street Metro in this important corridor. The project is also a key extension of recent efforts, including Capital Bikeshare, to encourage use of non-motorized transportation whenever feasible.

Alexandria is working to meet aggressive greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, as contained in the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan adopted by City Council in 2011. Meeting these goals requires significantly reducing transportation-related emissions, which comprise over 30 percent of our community's greenhouse gas emissions. Alexandria must join cities across the country and the region in making bicycle and pedestrian transportation access the rule, rather than the exception. EPC believes that this will be much better accomplished by establishing full bike lanes than requiring cyclists to join the same lane as fast-moving cars and trucks. Requiring cyclists and drivers to switch between separate bike and car lanes to a shared lane would heighten the risk to cyclists and motorists.

Importantly, making biking and walking safe and convenient will encourage use of active transportation which can help reduce obesity and associated health care issues among our citizens. The strategic location of this project makes it an important link for access both transit and T.C. Williams High School. Full bike lanes will enable more of our high school students to safely bike to school.

EPC believes the benefits of this project, as originally proposed, would far outweigh the limited adverse impact in terms of parking convenience, not necessity, it would have for a very small number of households. By approving full bike lanes for King Street, the Traffic and Parking Board can make Alexandria safer and more livable for the entire community, helping residents throughout the area live healthier and economically productive lives while reducing their impact on the environment. The King Street Traffic Calming and Bike Lanes Project is a critical step in meeting Alexandria's commitment as an Eco-City. We request that you support the full extent of King Street bike lanes as originally proposed between W. Cedar Street and Janneys Lane.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your work on behalf of all Alexandria.

Sincerely,

Scott Barstow
Chair, Environmental Policy Commission

cc: City Council



**DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, PARKS
AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES**

1108 Jefferson Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Park and Recreation Commission

December 10, 2013

Rich Baier, Director
Transportation and Environmental Services
Alexandria, Va. 22314

Re: Lower King Street Bike Lanes

Dear Director Baier:

Thank you for coming to the last Park & Recreation Commission meeting to give our members a short briefing on the proposed bike lanes on King St. from Janneys Lane to the bottom of the King St. Hill near the Amtrak Station. We understand the recent compromise retaining some parking with a dedicated bike lane each side of the auto travel lanes represents a reasoned response to the homeowners abutting a part of the route who wish to preserve on-street parking.

As presented to the Park & Recreation Commission the majority of our members concurred that the compromise configuration is a very positive step forward toward promoting more bicycle use in this part of the City, and will make this heavily travelled route safer both now and into the future.

After you departed, the Commission had a presentation from staff on the most recent iteration of the Recreational Needs Assessment. This 2013 assessment update, coincidentally, documents that 13% of the (statistically valid) survey respondents use bikes to travel to parks and recreational centers, 53% reported they have a need for bike trails and 33% of the City's households report that for them bike trails are the most important facilities offer by the City, weighing-in only behind walking trails and natural areas.

As the Commission stated last evening, the plan that is being considered now should be weighed with an eye to the potential future use bicyclists, not only to accommodate today's needs. We all hope that 10 years hence there will be much increased bike traffic along this corridor and throughout the City. We are "The Eco-City" and as such we should be doing all we can to get people out of their cars and on foot or bikes, but we must plan for increased safety as we do so. This plan seems to accomplish that goal while responding in as much as is possible to neighborhood concerns about off-street parking.

The Park and Recreation Commission voted in favor of supporting this compromise plan. We ask that pass this communication on to the appropriate board for consideration.

With kind regard,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Judy R. Guse-Noritake".

Judy R. Guse-Noritake, Chair
Park & Recreation Commission

Cc: Park & Recreation Commission

**Alexandria Transportation Commission
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314**

Mr. Richard Baier, Director of Transportation
& Environmental Services
Alexandria City Hall
301 King Street, Suite 4100
Alexandria, VA 22314

December 5, 2013

Re: King Street Bicycle Improvements

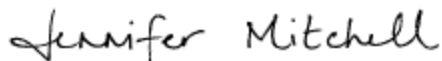
Dear Mr. Baier:

At the December 4, 2013 Transportation Commission meeting, the Commission discussed the proposed bicycle and pedestrian improvement project on King Street between West Cedar Street and Janneys Lane. This is an important project that is needed to provide safe and adequate access for bicyclists and pedestrians between Old Town, the King Street Metrorail station and activity centers to the west including TC Williams High School. The project will also provide pedestrian improvements and narrow travel lanes to maintain vehicular speeds at the posted speed limit.

The Transportation Commission endorses the original staff recommendation for bike lanes on King Street, as it is consistent with the City's Transportation Master Plan, Complete Streets Policy and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The City's Complete Streets Policy offers a number of situations in which a street might be exempt from implementing Complete Streets infrastructure such as disproportionate cost or non-motorized use prohibited by law, and none of the allowable exceptions apply in this case. We commend the work staff has put into developing a compromise solution in response to public comments. The staff compromise recommendation for sharrows, while not fully consistent with the Complete Streets policy, retains ten on-street spaces. We believe it is acceptable because it would still address pedestrian and bicycle safety issues.

With that noted, the Transportation Commission does not support any further compromise that would degrade pedestrian and bicycle safety along this portion of King Street. T&ES staff have put significant time and effort in developing a compromise solution, and we believe that additional deliberation will simply further delay to the implementation process without resulting in a better design solution. We respectfully request that you make a decision on this important Complete Streets project, and proceed with implementation in a timely manner.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Mitchell
Chair, Alexandria Transportation Commission

Copy to: Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Silberberg, and Members of the City Council

November 20, 2013

Dear Chairman Johnson and members of the Traffic and Parking Board,

I am writing on behalf of the Alexandria Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) to request that you support the city's Traffic Calming project on King Street. This project is needed to meet requirements of the Transportation Master Plan, the Complete Streets Policy, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan all of which have been approved by City Council. Now the city is in the process of implementing these plans and policies. The King Street project is one that will provide a safer environment for our citizens.

The King Street Traffic Calming project is primarily a safety issue. The city staff knows this is a safety issue, our members know this is a safety issue and almost all the residents on King Street would agree that this is a safety issue. Just last week the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) [1] released data which showed pedestrian deaths increased for the third consecutive year, up 6.4% over the previous year and cyclist deaths increased 6.5%. Action is needed now to improve safety for all.

King Street bike lanes will provide much needed safety improvements to nearby residents and Alexandrians at large.

1. Traffic calming. According to City staff, narrowing the main travel lanes will reduce speeding. Local residents have repeatedly told BPAC that they need to reduce vehicle speeds in this area. Studies also indicate that safety improves when more cyclists are on the street [2].

2. Pedestrian safety. Bike lanes provide a buffer between motor vehicles and pedestrians. Local residents have repeatedly told BPAC that they are afraid to walk along this section of King Street because of both the traffic speeds and immediate proximity of the travel lane.

3. Cyclist safety. Bike lanes are a proven safety measure to reduce conflicts between cars and bicycles [3]. Increased bicycling also increases safety for cyclists as well as pedestrians, and will decrease bikes on the sidewalks. "The likelihood that a given person walking or bicycling will be struck by a motorist varies inversely with the amount of walking or bicycling" [2].

Bike lanes on King Street address traffic congestion and demonstrate Alexandria's commitment to its policies and strategic goals.

1. Traffic congestion. These lanes will add capacity to King Street and will increase utilization of high-capacity Metrorail transit. Several King Street residents noted that bike lanes on King Street would increase the number of cyclists. That's the point! Our City's strategic goals recognize that the key to traffic congestion relief is utilization of high-capacity transit and non-motorized access to transit.

2. Citizen health. King Street bike lanes will increase fitness and reduce health issues. Studies show that people who routinely use transit are three times more likely to attain recommended exercise levels [4]. This project improves access to T C Williams High School and is a step forward for our Safe Routes to School program.

3. Public process. This project demonstrates our commitment to implement policies and plans developed through extensive public dialog and debate. We ask that you support the goals of the Transportation Master Plan, the Complete Streets Policy, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan.

In the city's most recent proposed solution, the 5 foot north-side bike lane will replace the current 7 foot "parking lane." Comments at public meetings have clearly indicated that the current, mostly-empty parking lane provides both space and clear sight lines for driveway access. The bike lane on the south side of King Street would be reduced to 4 feet in the latest proposed combination of bike lanes and shared lanes. We support a 5-foot north-side line to improve access to driveways for residents.

BPAC supports the originally-proposed bike lanes extending all the way to Janneys Lane as the optimum solution for both safety and meeting the City's strategic direction, policies and plans. That said, we appreciate the hard work of city staff and recognize the value of their most recent proposed solution, with bike lanes from W. Cedar Street to Highland Place, and then shared lanes east of the traffic light at Highland Place. While not optimum, the combined bike lanes and shared lanes would be a significant improvement over existing conditions.

We believe public safety for all should be paramount and is a sufficiently compelling reason for approval of either version of this project. We request that the Board approve the King Street Project, not only because it implements City-Council approved plans and policies, but also, because it provides much-needed Public Safety for all.

Jerry King
Chair, Alexandria Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
703-362-7673

Copy to:
Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Silberberg, and Members of the City Council
Director, Transportation and Environmental Services

[1] [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#)

[2] Safety in numbers: more walkers and bicyclists, safer walking and bicycling, Peter Lyndon Jacobsen, Injury Prevention 2003, Volume 9 Issue 3, pages 205-209,
<http://injury prevention.bmj.com/content/9/3/205.abstract>

[3] Jacobsen and Rutter, "Cycling Safety" in City Cycling, eds. Pucher and Buehler, MIT Press, 2012.

[4] Journal of Public Health Policy, 2009,
http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2009-03/uobc-ptu032609.php